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ken, dass ich fürs afr. eine entwicklung von lateinischem nachtonigen, sonantisch gewordenen *n* zu *r* annehme, also *ordinem*+conson. anlaut: *ordr* (geschriebenen *ordre*), *ordinem*+vocal. anlaut: *orne*, s. Diez Wtbch⁴. 650. Cf. auch franz. *dartre*, Langres, *havre*, *diacre*, *Estevre*, *dombre*." When a phonetic law is formulated with such restrictions as these, the lack of material will often make it very difficult to prove either its entire impossibility or its absolute necessity. In favor of the case discussed here, we might be inclined to quote the analogy of a similar, although not an equivalent sound-change in Spanish; and the persistence of the consonant before the *r* shows that we have indeed to deal with an original *n* and *r* sonans. Yet, when we examine the question in connection with other facts, we may perhaps come to a different conclusion, and prefer an explanation which I wish here to submit to the consideration of Romance scholars.

We will first add to LENZ's list: *Acre* (ACCON) *coffre* (COPHINUM) *pampre* (PAMPINUM); some other words may have escaped our attention. The *-re* of these words, according to my opinion, is due not to any phonetic law but to an analogical change of suffix, caused by the many nouns in *-re*, which normally existed in the language: *prestre*, *fenestre*, *maistre*, *arbre*, etc., etc. It is true, that this *-re* never became a really "living suffix" in French, but we cannot help admitting its influence in the formation of such words as *esclandre*, *apôtre*, *titre*, *chapitre*, *épître*, *martre*,

chartre, *costre*, *cordre*, and especially *Sambre*, *celestre*, *escientre*, *encre*, *diantre*, *gouffre*, *filandre*, perhaps *goïnfre*, *gouliastre*, *sastre* and others of doubtful origin.

On the other hand, some of the nouns with *n* in their etymon occur also without the *r*. They have, then, preserved the *n*, and still the preceding consonant has not disappeared, which proves that here also *n* was originally *sonans*: *juéfne*, *Estefne*, *ordene*; we must, of course, not quote *asne*, *chesne*, *almosne* in this connection, nor *imagine*, which is not a popular word but a learned form, as nearly all its sounds show. *Hâve* (beside *havre*) has entirely lost the suffix, and other double forms of a similar character are *golfe*: *gouffre*, *coulte*: *cotre*, *marle*: *martre*, (while *Montmarthe*: *Montmartre* should probably be understood differently). Consequently there must have been in the language some uncertainty as regards the suffix *-re*, and we have just seen that it *must* have been added analogically in some cases. The question accordingly arises, whether we shall simply admit its influence in all the forms concerned, or whether we prefer to lay down phonetic laws, based upon only a few words which can be easily explained otherwise.

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DÉSIRÉ NISARD AND THE HISTORY OF LITERATURE.

A noticeable feature of the reminiscences of DESIRÉ NISARD in the French periodicals is the absence of views on his influence as a critic. Old pupils of the École Normale sketch his directorship of that institution, his personal bearing, his attitude towards the Empire, comment on the legend of the "Two Morals," but in their mention of his works cast hardly a glance at his master-piece, nor attempt an estimate of his services as a historian of literature.

Reasons for this neglect are obvious. The memory of NISARD's campaign against Romanticism, much more his silence in the face of Realism, unite to make all literary critics of the present generation hostile to him. The few adherents of the Classical school have not yet spoken.

I wish that some thorough specialist in Germanics would make our readers acquainted with the chief results obtained by the author.—Here only a few questions: the first element of *lätmūt* seems to be the German *Leid*?—May *mästung* (suffix *-ung* instead of *-ing*) contain or be influenced by *Dung*?—Should not mhd. *meister* *meinster* have been brought into connection with *weist*, *meinst*, rather than with *mein*? *Meinst* might have received the nasal from *minst*, *minnest*.—*pašte* reminds one of *ab-basteln*.—*truñ* seems to be connected with *troddel*.—With "*as kot esprich*" cp. the Swiss "*as mū chīt*," and the Saxon "*als Got der Herre*" (in 'BLIEMCHEN IN LONDON'). *Der Herre* in the Saxon saying is, of course, a transformation of some form of *reden*. But the whole expression remains difficult to explain.—If the exclamation *ma!* could be simply understood as the possessive pron. *mein* *sc.* *Gott*, it might be compared with the English *O my!* and *dear me!* I think *dear me* is not, as generally believed=Italian *dio mio*, but=*dear my Lord*, the last word being left out for obvious reasons.

Yet the 'History of French Literature' is of no small actual importance. However vulgar it may be to estimate literary success from the publisher's point of view, in the case of a book of solid reading, full of analyses and arguments, which has no longer the attraction of novelty and which is rather out of fashion than otherwise, the demand of the public furnishes an indication of its influence. Its prefaces are its milestones. NISARD signed his first preface in 1844, his third in 1863, his seventh and final in 1879; but he lived to authorize the fourteenth edition. Thus in sixteen years, 1863-1879, four editions appeared: in the following eight, seven were necessary. So increasing a popularity cannot be wisely ignored.

NISARD was a critic of clear-cut theories. He chose his measure and abided by it. There is thus a unity in his work, a close connection of its parts, a constantly recurring standard of appreciation, which gives to it unexcelled order and clearness. His purpose, as he states at length in the first chapter, is to write a history of literature and not a literary history in the manner of the Benedictines. It is also not to be a history of language, though his distinction here is less obvious, for further on he states that all French writing previous to the Renaissance belongs to the history of language. Literature, he continues, begins with the appearance of art and ceases with its disappearance. By art in literature, he means the expression of general truths in a perfect language; that is, a language perfectly conformed to the genius of the country where it is spoken and to the spirit of humanity. It must therefore be a language formed and fixed. Hence the history of literature is the history of that which, in literary productions, has not ceased to be true, living and acting, and, in this instance, the history of that which is essential, constant and unchangeable in the French spirit. Now this spirit, according to NISARD, is preëminently practical, doing away with vain curiosity and idle speculations, in which quality alone it differs from the spirit of antiquity. It favors discipline rather than liberty. This difference has its cause in the influence of Christianity, which develops the practical side of human nature. That mirror of the French spirit which reflects its image

most exactly, is naturally to be found in its language. Those writers who most faithfully return the reflection of the French spirit have alone survived in the mind of the nation and are alone to be considered by the historian. It is his duty to compare the original with the portrait and to render reasons for the judgment that France has instinctively given.

To follow NISARD in the individual application of his rule would be a fruitless repetition of former criticisms. In general it is best adapted to prose writing and he does not hesitate to treat nearly all the literary prose productions from the time of VILLEHARDOUIN. He finds in the early chroniclers and in certain of the early poems, 'Roland,' 'Renart,' the 'Roman de la Rose' various traits of the French spirit and much of the language of durable works. The prose of the sixteenth century commands his increasing approbation until in DESCARTES and PASCAL he finds the models he has sought. Poetry, on the other hand, is but little suited to the requirements of NISARD. He has before his eyes the fear of BOILEAU. No notion of the lyric poetry of the Middle Ages before CHARLES D'ORLEANS. No mention of BAIF, BELLEAU, PASSERAT, while the pages devoted to RONSARD are but a prose commentary of BOILEAU's lines. LA FONTAINE he praises, ANDRÉ CHÉNIER he calls a true poet.

The chapter on MOLIÈRE is inferior only to those on DESCARTES and PASCAL in analysis, enthusiastic estimate and style, but MOLIÈRE is to him rather the embodiment of the French spirit than a writer of either prose or poetry. So in his condemnation of FÉNELON and ROUSSEAU he pays his respects rather to their "chimerical" spirit of liberty than to their manner.

The principal defect in the rule of NISARD seems to be the assumption that art exists in a fixed language only, meaning thereby the language of the seventeenth century, the language of RACINE. It may be disputed against him whether each period of linguistic development does not have its artistic language and whether productions that mirror faithfully the spirit of that age may not be considered as literature. The *lais* of Marie de France or of 'Aucassin et Nicolette' bear in

their grace and beauty no less trace of artistic effort than does 'Andromaque.' France, at least, no longer refuses to recognize in them its image, and thus exposes the arbitrary limits of NISARD to the danger of seeing succeeding epochs render justice to what had before been unknown or disdained.

Exception might likewise be taken to the statement that the predominant trait of the French mind is the practical. That common sense prevails in French literature is seen in the tendency towards satire. Yet it is a question whether this arises so much from a practical bent as from aversion to what lacks order, moderation; or, as NISARD says, from desire for discipline. There is, however, a logical sequence of thought, rigorous in its unfolding, running through French literature, whose result, practical or otherwise, depends entirely on the premises.

From another standpoint NISARD'S definition of art might perhaps be open to objection: as to whether literature must always present general truths. Human nature remains the same in its outlines, but each change of social surroundings brings into prominence different shades of thought and emotion. That all variations of humanity are essentially the same general truths may be philosophically axiomatic, but whether the presentation in literature of these variations is accepted as true in all time may be open to doubt. The novels of the seventeenth century may be conceded to represent certain phases of the human mind, but it is evident that NISARD does not consider them to be literature. DAUDET is beyond cavil an artist, but a change of social conditions will render his best works unreadable.

Thus the history of literature has for us a broader meaning than is afforded by the definition of NISARD. It is the history of the human mind expressed in language. The study of human thought in the various periods of its manifestation, which by no means implies the study of all linguistic productions but rather of those that are typical, leads to an intelligence of national traits that can be used as a basis of comparison for the striking characteristics of each period. The rule of NISARD embraces but a part of the truth; it was also not applied impartially or indepen-

dently. Yet with its shortcomings, its one-sidedness, we owe to it many admirable delineations of works and authors, among which are the best presentations of some of the greatest writers of France, a valuable defence of classical taste, and a constant incentive to express the true by the beautiful.

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OLD ENGLISH LITERATURE.

English Writers. An attempt towards a History of English Literature. By HENRY MORLEY, LL. D., Professor of English Literature at University College, London. Vol. I, Introduction. Origins. Old Celtic Literature. Beowulf. Cassell & Co., 1887. Vol. II. From Caedmon to the Conquest. 1888.

This edition of PROFESSOR MORLEY'S 'English Writers' is a re-writing of his well-known work first published in 1864-67, two volumes in three, and extending to Dunbar, or to the invention of printing. The two smaller volumes now published form the first instalment of an intended 'History of English Literature' in twenty volumes, and two more volumes will complete the period covered by the original work. It was designed that the volumes should be issued half-yearly, but the Preface to the first volume is dated January, 1887, and the "Last Leaves" of the second volume, January 1888, so that at this rate it is to be feared that the work will never be completed by its author, a result much to be regretted on many accounts. With great modesty PROFESSOR MORLEY remarks in his Preface: "After waiting and working on through yet another twenty years, the laborer has learned that he knows less and less. Little is much to us when young; time passes and proportions change. But, however small the harvest, it must be garnered," and in his "Last Leaves:" "If the evening of life do not give long enough light for the completion of this book, it will be, at any rate, complete as far as it goes." That this light may be granted will be the earnest desire of every student of English literature.

The instalment now given to the public